

Kalyana-Kalpataru



Pray for Divine Love

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B. K. Mitra

The Lord in Kaliyuga

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



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Lord Kalki

म्लेच्छनिवहनिधने कलयसि करवालम् ।
धूमकेतुमिव किमपि करालम् ॥
केशव धृतकल्किशरीर जय जगदीश हरे ॥

"Hail to the ruler of the entire world Lord Keśava embodied in His *Kalki* form who strikes the most fierce comet-like sword on the *Mlecchas* in order to annihilate them."

—*Stotraratnāvalī* (*Daśāvatārastotram* 10)



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Six Things in Fourfold Groups

(Continued from page 637)

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

Four types of liberation—

There are four kinds of liberation—*Sālokya*, *Sāmīpya*, *Sārūpya* and *Sāyujya*. *Sālokya* means residence in the divine abode; *Sāmīpya* means living near God; *Sārūpya* means attainment of a form similar to that of God; and *Sāyujya* means absorption in the form of God. Similarly, liberated souls are also of four kinds—

(1) One who accepts the state of liberation and, at the same time, goes on with the activities of the world. Activities of the world, in his case, means placing before ignorant people, who have lost the true path, the example of his excellent conduct, and through instructions about the practice of devotion, guiding them towards liberation.

(2) One who, though qualified to attain liberation, does not accept that state, and craves only for devotion. In addition, he is engaged also in instructing people in the practice of devotion.

(3) One who neither accepts liberation, nor does the work of a teacher, but as a recluse, living constantly in the world of thought, keeps himself engaged in the exclusive service of his beloved Lord. “मुक्ति निरादरि भगति लुभाने” (showing disrespect to Liberation feels attracted to Devotion).

(4) One who, attaining the state of Liberation, ever maintains an attitude of indifference towards the world.

Four types of men and women—

Men and women, ordinarily found in the world, are also

of four types. Firstly, those who are happy in this world, and will be happy in the next world. Secondly, those who are miserable here, and will be miserable in the next world. Thirdly, those who are happy here, but will be miserable in the next world; and, fourthly, those who are suffering from misery here, but will be entitled to happiness in the next world. In detail, these classes should be understood as follows—

(1) Endowed with the human body, those who cultivate faith in God and the next world, and keep themselves engaged in the practices of *Bhajana*, meditation and *Satsaṅga*, etc., remain happy in this life and attain supreme happiness in the next world. As the effect of *Bhajana*, meditation and *Satsaṅga*, joy and peace come to them during their earthly life as a matter of course; and when they cast off the mortal frame, they attain both supreme peace and supreme bliss, realizing the supreme state, as the fruit of their *Bhajana*.

(2) Quarrelsome people, who are subject to attraction and hatred, and are caught in the web of lust, anger and greed, and who impelled by their own nature are found to be ever engaged in enmity, hatred and strife, indulging in filthy and vulgar abuses, physical assault and contention in the Law Court, etc., remain miserable in this world, and obtain misery in the next world as well. Because of enmity and opposition, their heart goes on burning in this world, day and night; and after death, as the result of their sins, they suffer the pains of existence in the various low orders of beings, and go through the tortures of hell.

(3) Those who as the result of their good *Prārabdha* obtain various enjoyments of the world, but who due to their worldly attachments keep themselves engaged in malpractices like falsehood, deceit, theft, adultery, etc., enjoy this world's happiness due to their *Prārabdha*; but in the next world, their plight becomes terrible.

(4) Those who, keeping themselves engaged in the disinterested practice of sacrifice, charity, *Japa*, meditation, visit to sacred places, vows, fasts, service of others, self restraint, renunciation, and askesis, etc., suffer in this world, and appear afflicted in the eye of the world, but who, as the result of their practices and penance, will attain the supreme state after death and will realize, for all time, supreme peace and supreme bliss.

(To be continued)



You all know the unfortunate condition in which we find so many families today: children going astray, having lost sight of any sense of morality; wives and husbands unhappy in their marriages because they are not feeling fulfilled by their spouse. You are never going to find perfect love in any human being. If you are looking for fulfilment from another person, you will be looking until the end of your life! Perfect love is found only in God. Marriages and families should be centred in God. In taking the marriage vow, the intent should be, "I choose this person as my dearest friend, to whom I can talk and open up my heart—and eventually to share that friendship and love with our children as a united family." Commitment is what is needed today.

—Self-Realization

Devotional practices are necessary only so long as tears of ecstasy do not flow at once on hearing the name of Hari. He needs no devotional practices whose heart is moved to tears at the mere mention of the name of god.

—Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

Love

—Swami Ramsukhdas

Love for God develops in a man, as soon as his attraction for the world is completely gone.

Whatever thing is yours, you like it always. So taking God as your own, love for God also develops.

How surprising, that the ever-existing changeless entity—God is not loved, but the ever changing world appears so dear.

So long as there is attachment to the world, there is no real love for God.

The world's pleasure-giving propensity, is a special obstacle to God's love. If one renounces this propensity, then love for God would automatically arise.

So long as man has an attraction for the perishable, till then, even with spiritual practice, one is not attracted by the love of non-perishable God, nor realize Him.

Exclusive love for God, is called the *Rādhā Tattva*. So long as there is attraction for the world, the *Rādhā Tattva* is not intuited.

There is no worship that equals the love of God.

So long as an aspirant wants to carry out his own wishes, till then, he would neither love God with attributes nor God without attributes.

God's love is not acquired by sacrifices, penance, charity, fasting, pilgrimage, etc., but through regarding him firmly as one's own.

You do not get love from practising penance, but only achieve power. Love arises from treating God, as one's own.

In the love of God, there is an exclusive rapture that

is not a knowledge. Knowledge gives unbroken happiness, but love endless bliss.

Differences exist amongst sects, not in love. Love devours all differences completely.

The pull towards God is called devotion. Devotion is never complete but it keeps on increasing more and more.

For the love of God, one must have greater closeness with Him. For His vision a fervent craving is essential.

Knowing the world, would make one a renunciate. By knowing God, greater love for Him would result.

One whose realization is sure, love Him. Do serve the world that is sure to be separated.

That is love, where there is no impurity of personal comfort and selfishness.

Love is ahead of salvation even. Upto salvation one can relish it, but in love, one becomes the giver of bliss.

In the path of knowledge, sorrow and bondage are gone and one gets established in oneself, but one achieves nothing. In the path of devotion, one acquires love which increases every moment.

Without knowledge, love passes off as delusion, and without love, knowledge is lost in nothingness.

One within whom exist the previous influences of devotion, and the shelter of divine grace, he is not satisfied by liberation alone. God's blessings dilute the taste of salvation and replace it by granting him unlimited love.

No insistence on one's creed and not resorting to the disregard, rebuttal, or disrespect of another sect, after salvation, automatically helps achieve divine love.

When the desire for enjoyment ends, there is fulfilment of knowledge, but there is no end to the thirst for love which is never quenched, and increases every moment.

In the world, there are both attractions and repulsions (likes and dislikes), but in God there is only attraction and

no repulsion at all. If there is any repulsion, then in reality, there has been no attraction.

Just as from a worldly point of view, without greed for wealth, there is no special importance for the same, so without love, knowledge has no special significance and it might lead to nothingness.



Life force enters the body through the agency of an interested, joyous attitude—it doesn't respond to a half-dead will. Learn to perform all your duties with a courageous cheerfulness welling up from within you. Then, as you perform your daily activities, you will see that a flood of vitality will move through all your muscles and through your entire body. Perform your daily duties with deepest happiness, thinking that you are not working for yourself alone but also for God and His children, all as a part of humanity and not apart from humanity. If you do this, undreamed of power and happiness will come to you.

—Paramahansa Yogananda

दम्भं मोहं मत्सरं पापकृत्यं
राजद्विष्टं पैशुनं पूगवैरम्।
यत्तोन्मत्तैर्दुर्जनैश्चापि वादं
यः प्रज्ञावान् वर्जयेत् स प्रधानः॥

"The intelligent man who relinquisheth pride, folly, insolence, sinful acts, disloyalty towards the king, crookedness of behaviour, enmity with many, and also quarrels with men that are drunk, mad and wicked, is the foremost of his species."

—Mahābhārata, Udyogaparva (XXXIII. 115)

The Three Sublime Sentiments

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

(1) All beings owe their origin to God, and are hence related to each other as brothers.

(2) The one soul resides in all the creatures of the world.

(3) In the form of all beings, it is God Himself who is manifest in the world.

All these three root ideas and sentiments enjoy the sanction of the scriptures and have been confirmed as truth by the experience of saints and noble souls. Among them, again, comparatively speaking, one that follows is superior to one that precedes. Let us take them up one by one for consideration.

(1) All creatures of the world have taken their birth from God, are living in God alone through God's own Existence aspect and would eventually merge in God.

‘यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।
यत्प्रयन्यभिसंविशन्ति।’

(*Tai. Up. Bhr. Anu.1*)

God is the parent of all, the grandsire of all. Therefore, all are brothers. And brothers should naturally love and do good to each other; and they will also not harm each other. Cultivation of this sentiment is bound to result in mutual love and good. In a soil manured with the spirit of brotherliness, the flower of sacrifice automatically blossoms. A brother's happiness and interest become one's own and this results in mutual satisfaction. Śrī Rāma wanted to install Bharata on the throne of Ayodhya, while Bharata was not

ready to accept anything but the privilege to serve Śrī Rāma. Śrī Rāma considered His exile a turn of good fortune for Him, inasmuch as it paved the way for Bharata's accession to the throne—

“My dearly loved Bharata may
Have the kingdom in his sway.
Oh! Fortune is in every way
Smiling over me today.”

And Bharata on his part proceeds to the forest to meet Śrī Rāma and requests Him—

“You return, and with my brother
Let me be to the forest sent.
Or turn them both, and make myself
The partner of your banishment.”

It is a great misfortune for the world that such holy sentiment has now become almost extinct. Today a brother is treated almost as an enemy. A brother is himself bent upon doing the greatest wrong to his brother. This is nothing but unsoundness of mind. In order to escape from this madness thinkers of the West discovered and propagated the idea of Universal Brotherhood, which, however, suffered from one great shortcoming. It aimed to establish brotherly sentiments towards human beings only, and ignored all other living creatures. This defect notwithstanding, the movement did not go far enough. For mean self-interest did not allow sacred brotherhood to take root. Guided by selfishness brothers themselves began to cut one another's throats. This is why the world is so full of misery today. Where can we find a brother like Śrī Rāma in the present age, who is never tired of singing the praises of his step brother? Says Śrī Rāma—

"Dynasty of the Solar Kings

Is like a pond; where like a crane

Did Bharata come to live and strain

The virtues out of evil things.

The milk of virtues he approved,

The lymph of vices he did throw

And by his glory's radiant glow

The darkness of the world removed."

(To be continued)



Poverty has its own virtues. It infuses humility, strength, power of endurance and the spirit of struggle and perseverance, whereas luxury begets laziness, pride, weakness, inertia and all sorts of evil habits. Do not grumble, therefore, of bad environment. Create your own mental world and environment. That man who tries to evolve or grow in adverse environment will be a very strong man indeed. Nothing can shake him. He will be of sterner stuff. He will have strong nerves. Man is certainly not a creature of environment or circumstances. He can control and modify them by his capacities, thoughts, good actions and right exertions. Therefore, dear brothers, exert, conquer nature and rejoice in the eternal *Ātmā*.

—Swami Sivananda

Real love is desireless and motiveless. One with pure love thinks: "I love him for no reason at all. I suffer because of that love, yet I still love. If I feel well, or don't feel well, if He looks at me, or if He doesn't look at me. If He is kind or if He is cruel, I can never think anything but good of Him.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Abridged Sermon of Maharṣi Rāman

Work performed with attachment is a shackle whereas work performed with detachment does not affect the doer.

Realisation of the self is the greatest help that can be rendered to humanity.

Prāṇāyāma—To watch the breath is one way of doing it. The mind abstracted from other activities is engaged in watching the breath. That controls the breath; in its turn the mind is controlled.

Varṇāśrama Dharma bears fruit only when done selflessly. That is, one must realise that he is not the doer, but that he is only a tool of some higher power. Let the higher power do what is inevitable and let me act only according to its dictates. The actions are not mine.

D—Please tell me *Upadeśa* on the way to salvation.

M—Worship of God is the only *Upadeśa*.

Karma done unselfishly purifies the mind and helps to fix it in meditation.

D—What is the rationalistic explanation of Draupadī's *Sārī* becoming endless.

M—Spiritual matters cannot be fitted into rationalism. Spirituality is transcendental. The miracle was after Draupadī had surrendered herself. The secret lies in surrender.

Japa even once uttered has its own good effect, whether the individual is aware or not.

So long as there is individuality, one is the enjoyer and doer. But if it is lost, the divine will prevails and guides the course of events.

Man owes his movements to another power, whereas

he thinks that he does everything himself.

When *Japa* is the predominating tendency, vocal *Japa* becomes eventually mental, which is the same as meditation.

To engage in your duty is the true prostration. To perform one's duty carefully is the greatest service to God.

All wish to rush out. There is no limit to going out. Happiness lies within and not without.

A visitor asked about *Āsana* (physical posture).

M— Abidance in God is the only true posture.

Destiny—Surrender, and all will be well. Throw all the responsibility on God. Do not bear the burden yourself. What can destiny do to you then?

D—Surrender is impossible.

M—Yes. Complete surrender is impossible in the beginning. Partial surrender is certainly possible for all. In course of time that will lead to complete surrender. It can be done only by surrender.

D—Is not destiny due to past *Karma*?

M—If one is surrendered to God, God will look to it.

D—Is it morally right for a man to renounce his household duties when he once realises that his highest duty is *Ātmacintana*.

M— What is bound to happen will happen. If you are destined to cease working, work cannot be had even if you hunt for it. If you are destined to work you cannot leave it; you will be forced to engage in it. So leave it to the higher power. You cannot renounce or hold as you choose.

Satsaṅga means *Saṅga* (association) with *Sat*. *Sat* is only the Self.

D—I am too weak to realize my Self.

M—Surrender yourself unreservedly and the higher power will reveal itself.

Japa is meant only for stilling the mind. Chanting (*Japa*) will lead to *Dhyāna* (meditation) and it is the means for

realising the self. It must be done always or as long as you can.

D—How is the mind to be purified?

M—By *Bhakti* and by *Karma* dedicated to God. It is not enough that one thinks of God while doing the *Karma*, but one must continually and unceasingly think of Him. Then alone will the mind become pure.

Japa means clinging to one thought to the exclusion of all other thoughts. That is the purpose of *Japa*; it leads to *Dhyāna* which ends in self-realisation.

D—What are the means for gaining will-power?

M—Your idea of will-power is success insured. Will-power should be understood to be the strength of mind which makes it capable of meeting success or failure with equanimity. It is not synonymous with certain success. Success develops arrogance and the man's spiritual progress is thus arrested. Failure on the other hand is beneficial, inasmuch as it opens the eyes of the man to his limitations and prepares him to surrender himself.

Self surrender is synonymous with eternal happiness. Therefore one should try to gain the equipoise of mind under all circumstances. That is will-power.

Again success and failure are the results of *Prārabdha* and not of will-power. A man may be doing only good and noble actions and yet prove a failure. Another may do otherwise and yet be uniformly successful. This does not mean that will-power is present in the one and not in the other.

In order to be in Bliss everlasting our devotion must be directed to its source, namely the feet of the ever-blissful Lord.

Think of the feet of the Lord and drink the nectar. Immortality is the fruit of devotion.

The mind alone is lost in the Lord's feet. Bliss overflows. Wherever or however it be, only let the mind

lose itself in the supreme.

Lay the single flower, the heart, at the feet of Śiva and remain at peace.

God proves the devotee by means of secure ordeals. A washerman beats the cloth on a slab, not to tear it, but only to remove the dirt.

One should not openly display one's piety.

What is meditation?

It consists in expulsion of thoughts. All the present troubles are due to thoughts and are themselves thoughts. Give up thoughts. That is happiness and also meditation.

Seek the company of saints; by all means; but do not remain indefinitely with them. A young plant growing beneath the shade of a full grown giant tree does not develop in strength and stature. Its growth will be dwarfed, shrivelled and diseased. Whereas if the same plant were put into the open ground directly exposed to the storms, heat, cold, and other rigours of changing weather, it is bound to grow into a mighty tree.

The explorers seek happiness in finding curiosities, discovering new lands. They are thrilling. But where is pleasure found? Only within. Pleasure is not to be sought in the external world.

Happiness is not to be sought in solitude or in busy centres. It is in the self.

He ordains everything and the universe acts accordingly.

Although the sun and the other luminaires are said to be self luminous yet they do not shine forth of themselves but they shine by the light of the Supreme Being.

The more the desires are fulfilled, the deeper grows the *Samskāra*. They must become weaker before they cease to assert themselves. That weakness is brought about by restraining oneself and not by losing one self in desires.

D—How can unerring rectitude be ensured for the worker?

M—If he has surrendered himself to God or the *Guru* the power to which he had surrendered will take him on the right course. The worker need no longer concern himself about the rectitude or otherwise of the course. The doubt will arise only if he fails to obey the master in all details.

If you surrender yourself to the higher power all is well. That power sees your affairs through. Only so long as you think that you are the worker you are obliged to reap the fruits of your actions. If on the other hand you surrender yourself and recognise your individual self as only a tool of the higher power, that power will take over your affairs alongwith the fruits of actions. You are no longer affected by them and the work goes on unhampered. Whether you recognise the power or not the scheme of things does not alter. Only there is a change of outlook. Why should you bear your load on the head when you are travelling in a train? It carries you and your load whether the load is on your head or on the floor of the train. You are not lessening the burden of the train by keeping it on your head but only straining yourself unnecessarily. Similar is the sense of doership in the world by the individuals.

That man who is active in the world and yet remains desireless, without losing sight of his own essential nature is alone a true man.

Even better than the man who thinks "I have renounced everything," is the one who does his duty but does not think. "I do this" or "I am the doer."

Even a *Samnyāsī* who thinks "I am *Samnyāsī*" cannot be a true *Samnyāsī*, whereas a householder who does not think "I am a householder" is truly a *Samnyāsī*.

Desire constitutes *Māyā* and desirelessness is God.

D—There is more pleasure in *Dhyāna* than in sensual enjoyments. Yet the mind runs after the latter and does not seek the former. Why it is so?

M—Pleasure or pain are aspects of the mind only. Our essential nature is happiness. But we have forgotten the self and imagine that the body or the mind is the self. It is that wrong identity that gives rise to misery. What is to be done?

This *Vāsanā* is very ancient and has continued for innumerable past births. Hence it has grown strong. That must go before the essential nature, viz., happiness asserts itself.

The essential point is that the mind must always remain in its source. If the mind is active even solitude becomes like a market place. There is no use closing your eyes. Close the mental eye and all will be right.

The good persons will not care to make plans previous to their actions. Why so? For God who has sent us into the world has his own plan and that will certainly work itself out.

Desire alone does not bring about the end in view. He who is not accepted by God is certainly humiliated. He who has surrendered himself, body and mind to God, becomes famous all over the world.

D—What are the good ways to be shown to the mind.

M—Thought of God.

Daily *Pūjā* as prescribed in the *Dharma Śāstras* is always good. It is for the purification of the mind. Even if one feels oneself too advanced to need such *Pūjā*, still it must be performed for the sake of others. Such action will be an example to one's children and other dependents.

The oral repetition of *Nāma* leads one to mental repetition which finally resolves itself into eternal vibration.

God is in all and works through all. But His presence is better recognised in purified minds. The pure ones reflect God's action more clearly than the impure minds.

D—A man sometimes finds that the physical body does

not permit steady meditation. Should he practise *Yoga* for training the body for the purpose?

M—The quest for the self is the essential factor and all the rest are mere accessories.

D—We worldly men cannot resist desire.

M—You may desire but be prepared for any eventuality. Make effort, but do not be lost in the results. Accept with equanimity whatever happens. For pleasure and pain are mere mental modes. They have no relation to the objective realities.

Courtesy—*M. L. Chhibber*



The Hindus have received their religion through revelation, the *Vedas*. They hold that the *Vedas* are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience how a book can be without beginning or end. But, by the *Vedas*, no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery, and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul, and between individual spirits and the father of all spirits, were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forgot them.

The discoverers of these laws are called *Rṣis* (sages) and we honour them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very greatest of them were women.

—*Swami Ranganathananda*

Inner Pollution

—*R. P. Dwivedi*

Pollution of air, water, noise, flora and fauna,
And all our salubrious, natural surroundings,
Has invaded and spoilt our environment,
An endangered our peaceful, earthly existence.

II

The perils of outer pollution, baneful as it is, for mankind
Pale into insignificance as we seriously ponder over
Our inner pollution of appalling decay of human values
And erosion of morals, which have stood the test of time.

III

Our inner pollution stems from our utter indifference
Towards our fellow men, who are as much heir to
Nature's gifts
As we are; yet driven by lust, greed, infatuation and anger,
And vaulting ambition, we have totally dehumanised
ourselves.

IV

Blind to our primal duty of human welfare
And a life of understanding and sympathy for all,
We are in hot pursuit of fleeting, materialistic pleasures
Which illusory like mirage, recede into nothingness.

V

Inner pollution, which springs from gross consumerism
Is far more fatal than all external pollution.
For it disfigures life's beauty and defiles our ethos
And impedes our quest for the realm of spirit.

VI

Even as pollution causes us grave anxiety and anguish
A perverted attitude reflecting our evil designs
Is more harmful for it creates doubt distrust and hate,
And poisons the milk of human kindness and love.

VII

As inheritors of this beautiful planet earth,
We must enkindle in the hearts of all humans
Compassion and kindness and the light of love
For building up a harmonious world order.

VIII

Let us root out our inner pollutants;
That have cast a dark shadow over humanity,
Let us remove all psycho-ethical illusion
For Self-realization and perfect eternal bliss.



Śrī Nṛsimhāvatāram

—R. Kannan

Lord Śrīman Nārāyaṇa descends to earth and incarnates himself in any form He desires, to protect the good people, destroy the evil ones and reestablish the *Sanātana Dharma*.

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

(Gītā IV. 8)

In doing so, He has taken a number of *Avatāras* (Incarnations). Among them Śrī Nṛsimhāvatāram is an important one. Here, he proves that anybody having profound faith in Him will be protected from any type of dangers and that his enemies ill-wishers will be completely destroyed, irrespective of any strength his enemies may possess, by performing any type of penance and obtaining lots of boons whatsoever.

Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu were two demoniacal sons of Kāśyapa and his wife Diti. Hiraṇyākṣa stole the mother earth and hid the same in the deep waters of the ocean. Śrīman Nārāyaṇa took *Varāhāvatāram* (form of a wild boar) and in a fierce battle killed the demon.

Hiraṇyakaśipu, got wild hearing the death of his brother and vowed to kill Śrīman Nārāyaṇa and thus take revenge for the death of his brother. In order to become more powerful, he performed deep penance and got the boons from Brahmā—that is—he should not be vanquished by man or animal; he should not be killed in the day time or night; he should not be killed on the ground or in the sky; he should not be killed by any weapon like sword; he should not be killed either inside the house or in the open outside.

Having obtained these boons he thought that he could not be killed by anybody and became very arrogant. With his wild beastly power, he brought the three worlds under his control, as nobody was able to oppose him.

In order to revenge the death of his brother, Hiranyakaśipu started to search for Lord Hari (Nārāyaṇa). The Almighty, as wise as He was, could not be traced by the demon king. This made Hiranyakaśipu an atheist, although the belief that he was hiding somewhere was remaining in his mind always. Hence he continued to search for Him.

Because Hiranyakaśipu was always searching for the Lord, Prahlāda, one of the greatest devotees of the Lord was born to him as his only son. Pain, enjoyment, anger, delight, fear, valour, enmity, friendship etc., affect our bodies only and not our souls. Prahlāda, from early childhood felt himself one with God, enjoying the bliss of union with him and was completely different from the normal human being. His *Bhakti* was unparalleled and it was pure and so great that the Lord Himself protected him from all sorts of dangers and problems.

In the meanwhile, Hiranyakaśipu declared himself as the *Īśwara* (controller of all the worlds) and he wanted everyone to worship him as the Lord and no one should offer worship to Śrīman Nārāyaṇa, the actual *Īśwara* of the worlds.

Against the wishes of his own father Prahlāda worshipped Śrīman Nārāyaṇa only, because of his deep and true devotion to Him. Hiranyakaśipu directed his son to forget Nārāyaṇa and accept himself as the Lord. When Prahlāda vehemently opposed to that, the demon king decided to punish his own son—throw him from the top of a mountain; drown him in the deep sea; crush him under the feet of an intoxicated elephant and even poison his food. But Prahlāda came out unharmed from all the above cruel acts of his father having been protected by the omnipotent and omnipresent Lord Śrīman Nārāyaṇa.

Annoyed by the fact that his son could not be killed by other means, Hiranyakaśipu called his son to his court and told him that Hari was his worst enemy and he himself was searching Him to take the revenge of the death of his brother and that he should forget Hari or show him where that Hari was hiding, Prahlāda smiled and told his father that Hari was omnipresent as well as omnipotent. He had manifested Himself everywhere. Hiranyakaśipu got wild and asked Prahlāda whether he could show Hari in the pillar of the courtyard. Saying thus, he smashed the pillar in front of him. Immediately there was a big bang proving the words of his devotee Prahlāda. Lord Hari, in the beautiful form of Nṛsiṃha, combination of man and lion came out of the pillar, which no one expected. He took hold of Hiranyakaśipu, dragged him to the entrance of the house, put him on His own lap, tore open his heart with His fingernails in twilight (*Sandhyākāla*) and killed him fulfilling all the conditions of the boons obtained by him.

All *Devas* and others gathered there, worshipped Lord Nṛsiṃha, but were afraid to approach Him because of His fierce form. However Prahlāda went near him and worshipped Him with all praise. The Lord immediately calmed down and put a pleasing form and blessed all there with his consort Śrī Lakṣmī.

From the episode of *Śrī Nṛsiṃhāvatāram*, we learn a lot of things.

(1) Wealth, position and might make persons proud, haughty and blind Hiranyakaśipu was blind because of his might. (Indra became blind because of his position. Brahmā once became blind because of his high learned position).

(2) The only way to propitiate the Lord and please Him is to be his pure devotee like Prahlāda and have profound faith in Him.

(3) The Lord will surely come to the help of His true

devotee (not an opportunist) at the appropriate time and in the appropriate form.

(4) The Lord is omnipresent and omnipotent—no one is superior to Him.

(5) The Lord will appear wherever required by His devotee/even on His own will and save anybody who was taken refuge at His feet, from anybody whoever it might be. (He saved Gokul from the wrath of Indra—who normally worships the Lord).

Swāmī Deśikan, a great *Vaiṣṇava Ācārya*, declares that Lord Nṛsiṃha is present even today everywhere except the pillar from where He made the exit to kill Hiranyakaśipu (He had prepared Himself to come out from any place, in the form of Nṛsiṃha; but the demon king smashed only one pillar from where the *Avatāra* took place).

Even one true devotee like Prahlāda is enough to save the world from demoniacal persons who do atrocities against gods and fellow human beings.

Let us cultivate *Bhakti* like Prahlāda and worship Śrī Nṛsiṃha and get His blessings.



Carefully avoid talks of women, wealth and honour. Speak little, speak the truth, speak politely, speak only what is beneficial to others. Never do anything, nor utter any word, which may make it necessary for you to tell a lie in future to maintain your position. Never allow any word to escape your lips unthinkingly for which your position may be lowered in the estimation of others. Remember, he who desires to lower another in the estimation of others is bound some day to be lowered himself.

—Hanumanprasad Poddar

Great Ethical Values Displayed by a Small Wayside Vegetarian Hotel

—R. N. Lakhotia

On October 8, 2000, I and my wife left New Delhi by car to attend the funeral procession of an old relative (a widow) in Sahaswan of Badayun District of U. P. We left New Delhi in the early hours of the morning and reached Babrala via Hapur city at about 1.00 p.m. It was lunch time. Hence, we decided to have a quick lunch. We noticed a small vegetarian hotel at the road crossing. The owner of the hotel was one Mr. Agarwāla. When we enquired about the rate of food, Mr. Agarwāla said, "We would charge Rs. 15 per *Thālī*, in which besides chapatis and rice, there will be two vegetables, *Dahī*, *Raitā* and pickles." We ordered for three *Thālīs* for two of us and the driver. We also took one extra plate of curd priced at Rs. 5. When we finished our lunch, I handed over a fifty rupee note to the hotel owner being the cost of the three *Thālīs* and the curd, but Mr. Agarwāla, the owner returned Rs. 15 to me by saying that he would be charging Rs. 5 per *Thālī* less. I was surprised. Hence, I enquired about the reasons for charging only Rs. 10 per *Thālī*. Thereupon, Mr. Agarwāla said, "Sir, you have eaten only two chapatis, you have not eaten as per the full *Thālī* offered by us because people eat even more than eight chapatis and rice per *Thālī* and still we charge only Rs. 15. As you have eaten much less, we will charge Rs. 10 because I have to give an account of myself to God also."

We were greatly surprised to hear these words from a simple owner of a small wayside hotel who displayed such

great ethical value. This was a very unique and pleasant experience for me. The display of ethical value without being attached to greed by the simple gentleman has left an indelible impression upon my mind. This anecdote inspires us to charge for a thing or service only to a reasonable extent and never charge any unreasonable amount.



The human body is obtained through great fortune, all the scriptures describe it as difficult of attainment even by the gods. It is the proper vehicle for religious practices, and is the gate to salvation. He who obtaining it does not secure the good of the next world will suffer there and repent slapping his forehead for his mistake and will falsely blame Time, *Karma* and God for his sufferings. The human body is the boat to cross the sea of existence and My grace is the favourable wind. The God-realized *Guru* is the pilot of this strong boat. Thus man has easily obtained facilities which are most difficult to obtain. He who does not cross the sea of existence, even though placed in the midst of such association, that ungrateful creature of slow understanding is thrown into the state of torture suffered by men who are guilty of the crime of committing suicide.

—*Jayadayal Goyandka*

If you get attached to the Divine Sports, do it in a manner so as to forget this world altogether—nay, so as to see the Divine Sports alone everywhere even with these physical eyes.

—*Radha Baba*

Śrī Aurobindo's Message—Agenda for the 21st Century

—Prof. K. L. Bhalla

Śrī Aurobindo gave a message on his 75th birthday which would serve as agenda for the 21st century. He spoke of his dreams—a revolutionary movement which would create a free and united India; the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilization; a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind; the spiritual gift of India to the world; a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual a perfection and a perfect society.

He was born on August 15, 1872, at Calcutta. In Sanskrit the word 'Aurobindo means lotus'. His father chose this name for him, thinking that it was unusual but he did not know that the lotus is the symbol of divine consciousness. He was a militant nationalist turned into a spiritualist. He held that his *Yoga* was not merely meant for individual salvation but it was for mankind as a whole. Whereas the traditional religions promised the devotee liberation from the bonds of material existence he insisted that the ascent was only one aspect of the whole spiritual adventure.

The important feature of his *Yoga* is that it attempts a final reconciliation between spirit and matter. Matter is not different from spirit, it is in reality at a different level of evolution. Ultimately it will evolve into pure spirit. Matter

is spirit which is gross. Spirit is matter which is subtle. Both are aspects of One Omnipresent Reality. He evolved his own technique which he named *Integral Yoga* whereby man could actively contribute towards acceleration of the evolutionary process.

Humanity is in the making and requires to be made. This implies a new discipline, new law which must be followed and the way is profusely explained in the writings of Śrī Aurobindo. He was an optimist. His optimism originates from his faith in a purpose divine shaping the destiny of man. He believed that we were passing through a period of great significance. It is an evolutionary crisis but is also the hour of God, mankind is now ready for the next leap forward in the evolutionary process. This step is the evolution of mind to supermind. The instruments of this supermind will be intuition and perception. Nature is working out a certain evolutionary scheme. Apart from the spiritual meaning of this process which he explains in *Life Divine*, he also identified the principles in operation behind man's social and political developments. There is already the ideal of World Union being discussed.

It is not one political ideology or another but an integral approach to life and reality, a futurist vision, a determined effort to emerge from the mire of hypocrisy that can save India. The process must begin with the individual man. Man is an instrument in the hands of Almighty. He can rise to spiritual heights by means of self surrender as advocated by Śrī Aurobindo. To end all kinds of sufferings and troubles one must realise one's real self. This point has been stressed in these words of the *Bhagavadgītā*— "Arjuna, be an instrument" Śrī Aurobindo's spiritual pursuit is based on this very ideology. He meditated for years together at Pondicherry and at last left his mortal frame on December 5, 1950. For more than 111 hours the body remained shining with the

supramental light because of his intense *Sādhanā*.

India has always had a deep tradition of spiritual thought and practice. Śrī Aurobindo wanted India to be politically free not only for her own sake but for playing her true part in the spiritual regeneration of the world. Śisīra Kumāra in his book *Śrī Aurobindo* writes—"He is the seer, he is the vision, he is the truth, he is the will, and all these together seem to be what his earthly sojourn points to."

According to S. Rādhākṛṣṇan, the central need of contemporary man is integration, the achievement of harmony within himself which will be reflected in his relations with the world. To usher in the reign of the integrated man is the main purpose of Śrī Aurobindo's life and teaching. The word of God is dynamic and continuous. The divine spirit overbroods and indwells the soul of humanity as a whole. History records the stages of man's education. The saints and seers of mankind in every age have made articulate the growing word committed to the living soul of man interpreting to the peoples those truths and principles of which they were themselves aware only as a vague aspiration, or an indefinable discontent.

He has made unique contributions to philosophy, literature, sociology, politics, culture, anthropology, and *Yoga*. He belongs neither to the East nor to the West but to the centre of an evolving universe. Tagore hailed him as "The voice incarnate of India's soul." Romain Rolland saluted him as the greatest thinker of modern times. He appeared on the Indian political scene when the Congress was in his words, seeking soiled crumbs which England may cast to us from her table.

In the present world where there is a lot of stress and strain, quarrel and dissension, the message of Śrī Aurobindo can end the present sorry state of affairs. In the 21st century people all over the world will be guided by his teaching. Let us try to usher in a new world-order based on harmony

and become torch bearers in the darkness of cultural crisis. We pray to God, 'Lead us from unreal to real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality.'



Relations with the world 'are subject to and conditioned by obligations. There are ways to free oneself from these obligations, by serving all others and not desiring anything from anybody.

—Swami Ramsukhdas

Be regular, not spasmodic, with your spiritual routine. If you start up a car, then stop it, and start it up again and stop it, you are not going to get anywhere. If you start and keep going, you eventually arrive at your destination. So keep on with meditation, practising it everyday, even if you sometimes have to have a shorter meditation. I never allow the habit of regular meditation to be broken, no matter what happens. If you do this, you will see how your life goes forward, spiritually and in every other way.

—Daya Mata

एवं पुनर्ब्रह्मचर्याप्रसक्तो
 हित्वा धर्मं यः प्रकरोत्यधर्मम्।
 अभ्रह्मधत् परलोकाय मूढो
 हित्वा देहं तप्यते प्रेत्य मन्दः॥

"Similarly, he who, never having lived a continent life, forsaketh the path of virtue and commiteth sin, hath no faith in existence of a world to come. Dull as he is after death he hath torment (for his lot)."

—Mahābhārata, Udyogaparva (XXVII. 9)

Gītā: The Universal Mother

—Mahatma Gandhi

The following is the text of a Hindi speech that Gāndhījī delivered at Benares to students:

Never fails her devotees—

Early in my childhood I had felt the need of a scripture that would serve me as an unfailing guide through the trials and temptations of life. The *Vedas* could not supply that need, if only because to learn them would require fifteen to sixteen years of hard study at a place like Kashi, for which I was not ready then. But the *Gītā*, I had read somewhere, gave within the compass of its 700 verses the quintessence of all the *Śāstras* and the *Upaniṣads*. That decided me. I learnt Sanskrit to enable me to read the *Gītā*. Today the *Gītā* is not only my *Bible* or my *Koran*; it is more than that—it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth long ago; but this eternal mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom.

It is sometimes alleged against the *Gītā* that it is too difficult a work for the man in the street. The criticism, I venture to submit, is ill-founded. The *Gītā* enabled the late Lokamānya, out of his encyclopaedic learning and study to produce a monumental commentary. For him it was a stone-house of profound truths to exercise his intellect upon. But that need not scare away a lay reader. If you find all the eighteen chapters too difficult to negotiate, make a careful study of the first three chapters only. They will give you in a nutshell what is propounded

in greater detail and from different angles in the remaining fifteen chapters.

Even these three chapters can be further epitomised in a few verses that can be selected from these chapters. Add to this the fact that at three distinct places the *Gītā* goes even further and exhorts us to leave alone all 'isms' and take refuge in the Lord alone, and it will be seen how baseless is the charge that the message of the *Gītā* is too subtle or complicated for lay minds to understand.

The *Gītā* is the universal mother. She turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the *Gītā* does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. But that peace and joy come not to the sceptic or to him who is proud of his intellect or learning. It is reserved only for the humble in spirit who brings to her worship a fullness of faith and an undivided singleness of mind. There never was a man who worshipped her in that spirit and went back disappointed.

Ever fresh lessons—

Our students are prone to be upset by trifles. A trivial thing like failure in an examination plunges them into the darkest despair. The *Gītā* inculcates upon them the duty of perseverance in the face of seeming failure. It teaches us that we have a right to actions only but not to the fruit thereof, and that success and failure are one and the same thing at bottom. It calls upon us to dedicate ourselves, body, mind and soul, to pure duty, and not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of all chance desires and undisciplined impulses. As a *Satyāgrahī*, I can declare that the *Gītā* is ever presenting me with fresh lessons. If somebody tells me that this is my delusion, my reply to him would be that I shall hug this delusion as my richest treasure.

A Kāmadhenu—

I would advise the students to begin their day with an early morning recitation of the *Gītā*. I am a lover and devotee of Tulasīdāsa. I adore the great spirit that gave to an aching world the all healing *Mantra* of *Rāma Nāma*. But I am here today, not to present Tulasīdāsa to you, but to ask you to take up the study of the *Gītā*, not in a carping or critical spirit but in a devout and reverent spirit. Thus approached, she will grant your every wish. Once you have tasted of its sweet nectar, your attachment to it will grow from day to day. The recitation of the *Gītā* verses will support you in your trials and console you in your distress, even in the darkness of solitary confinement. And, if with these verses on your lips you receive the final summons and deliver up your spirit, you will attain *Brahma Nirvāṇa*, the Final Liberation. What that blessed state is—I leave it for your learned *Ācāryas* to explain to you.



Young people planning marriage should pray deeply to God to be guided aright. Meditation and sincere prayers will bring divine response in major and minor ways, developing the relationship between the girl and boy by creating various circumstances and incidents that will afford them an opportunity to judge whether or not their spiritual unity is sufficient to justify a lifelong association.....To enter marriage without due thought is an indication of recklessness and lack of judgment; it invites disaster. Any important step in life is worth long consideration; it is worth testing in the fires of daily experiences under varying circumstances.

—Paramahansa Yogananda

Understanding Consciousness

—*P. Govindarajan*

The basic difference between animal and man lies in the functioning of the mind. Man is born with several animal instincts like self-preservation, lust, aggression, anger, fear, life and death as also herd instinct etc. These get reflected in the wakeful state through the mind. Mind is a multifaceted inner mechanism carrying out a variety of important functions like perceiving, cognizing, thinking, remembering, judging, feeling, willing, imagining, innovating etc. Mind plays a very crucial role in every aspect of human life. It cannot, however, function without the existence of consciousness. In fact, the thinking, feeling and willing faculties of the mind are nothing but the different states of consciousness. Everyone is perfectly aware that he possesses consciousness that enables him to acquire knowledge. However, man has not so far found his way to know the knower.

Philosophers and psychologists from very ancient times have been spending the best part of their life in trying to understand the phenomenon of consciousness. All that is known about this most mysterious phenomenon is that a person devoid of consciousness is totally unaware of his own existence and he does not also know what happens around. It is the existence of consciousness that gives one the awareness of his individual existence and also knowledge of the objects and beings of the external world. The conscious state is the very base of human existence. The electrical and chemical activities of the brain are only the

reactions or effects of consciousness and not the cause of consciousness.

The existence of consciousness is a self-evident and personally experienced fact of life needing no external evidence or proof of any kind to testify its reality as the cessation of consciousness will mean the total loss of individuality. In fact, life can serve no useful purpose or can have any worthwhile meaning without consciousness. Neuro surgeons have noticed that the mutilation of the brain stem affects consciousness. They, therefore, speculate that the locus of consciousness may perhaps be in the brain stem.

Though the seat of consciousness may be in the brain, the jurisdiction of consciousness extends over the entire body. Consciousness located in the brain is able to feel the sensations of the whole body. Anything happening to the body is instantly brought to the notice of the brain like a flash of light or in modern terminology like E-mail. Consciousness cannot, therefore, be a physical organ but should be something ethereal like flame or light. It can perhaps be compared to the flame of a lamp. Though the flame emanates from the wick, its radiance spreads over a wide area. Similarly, although the locus of consciousness may be in the brain, the awareness of sensation covers the full body.

Consciousness mediates the acquisition of knowledge through the perception of the senses and the inference of the intellect. It thus helps one to get enlightened with knowledge. While it may be difficult to define consciousness in very precise terms, there are several characteristics that are unique and distinct to it, which are worth careful noting. Consciousness stays with us from birth till death as an indivisible whole without parts as it cannot be transplanted like any physical organ. Serious ailments of the physical body may dim but not extinguish consciousness except in

death. Loss of consciousness other than in the state of sleep may call for immediate medical attention. The activities of the senses, mind, intellect and memory are coordinated by consciousness to generate a unity of awareness. With the advancement in age, the consciousness does not undergo any change though the extent of awareness may expand or be impaired by amnesia or dotage. Even in the weightless state of zero gravity, the astronauts lose control only over their physical body but their consciousness remains unaffected which clearly indicates that consciousness is distinct from the inert body.

Neuro surgeons are very surprised to note that, even a sizeable removal of the damaged neurons from the brain does not affect the functioning of consciousness, which clearly proves that it is an indivisible whole without distinct component parts, psychologists add that artificial intelligence can never compete with the mind of man as computers cannot function without the feeding of data by man and computers do not also have the comprehending ability. In fact, in their well considered view only conscious being can be intelligent and the use of the term AI or artificial intelligence for man-made machines is a misnomer.

The 'I' in man is something different from consciousness. Man only says, "I am conscious" and not "I am consciousness." Consciousness cannot, therefore, be independent of life or being. Man is a knower possessing consciousness and not mere consciousness. Consciousness is like the inanimate flame and cannot exist independently by itself. It is; passive, impartial and neutral, as it has no preferences or prejudices of any kind. The growth of the physical body is automatic and natural through cell multiplication, but the scope and extent of consciousness depend on individual striving for mental growth.

In the wakeful state of consciousness, the senses and

mind are very active but in the dream state only the mind is active as one is able to recall the dream in the wakeful state. In the state of swoon or fainting, there is a temporary black out of consciousness resulting in lack of awareness of oneself and the external world. In the anaesthetic state, the central nervous system remains paralyzed temporarily because of the administration of drugs. In this state of unconsciousness, the functioning of the senses and mind are kept suspended for a short duration without impairing the functioning of the vital organs like heart, lungs, digestive and urinary systems etc. In brain damage or head injury, the supply of oxygen and glucose to the brain may be cut off causing coma or loss of consciousness. Some medical experts reckon the total loss of consciousness beyond the possibility of revival as brain death. In the state of sleep as also in coma, consciousness does not become totally extinct as in death but remains dormant. Medical experts, therefore, say that the removal of organs from the patients declared as clinically dead will require administration of anaesthesia as the brain-dead patients do feel the pain of such removal.

Though there is total loss of consciousness beyond repair in coma, the life support systems like heart, lungs, kidneys etc., continue to function and life cannot be considered as totally extinct. Life or being cannot, therefore, be equated with consciousness. Consciousness without life is inconceivable but vegetative existence in coma, for some length of time, without the existence of consciousness is quite possible. Life and consciousness are, therefore, not one and the same. Consciousness is different from life but it cannot exist independently of life. Like space and air, life and consciousness are inseparable and they stay together inalienably. Some people who are unable to distinguish one from the other hold the erroneous view that life and consciousness are one

and the very same. They, therefore, believe that consciousness can only be singular or one only without a second and not plural or many. In other words, they think that in the ultimate analysis, there can be only one universal or cosmic consciousness and not several centres of individual consciousness.

Every living being holds its separate identity as something highly precious and singular or universal consciousness will mean the disintegration of individuality and total extinction of personality. Only individual knowers possessing consciousness can experience pain or pleasure. If consciousness were to be singular, all living beings possessing consciousness should be in a position to experience the pain or pleasure as also the thoughts and feelings of all the others, which is far removed from the reality of things in the mundane world. Furthermore, when a person wakes up from sleep or recovers normal consciousness after anaesthesia, Yogic or hypnotic trance, or from altered state of consciousness induced by drugs etc., the individual concerned retains his past state of awareness totally intact, which means that the individual centre of consciousness can never be lost at any time. Besides, no individual will consciously strive for his own spiritual welfare and fulfilment if his very existence in future were to become extinct or lost in oblivion.

Life is the very same in all the living beings from micro-organism to man. However, the extent and scope of consciousness differ widely among the various species of living beings. In fact, biologists confirm that the evolution of consciousness is progressive in nature, as the emergence of higher and higher levels of consciousness in various living species is clearly discerned by them. The psychologists add that the basic differences in the level of perception, comprehension, intelligence, recall from memory etc., can be explained only in terms of expanded or contracted consciousness in the smart and dull people respectively.

Singular or universal consciousness can have no place for the well marked differences in the scope of consciousness. Consciousness can, therefore, be only individual and plural. However, life or being can be singular and universal because it is only consciousness that provides individuality and separate identity, of course, with the support of life or being.

Many people equate consciousness with awareness. Knowledge or awareness has to be clearly distinguished from consciousness. The acquisition of knowledge through the perception of senses or the inference of the intellect is possible only because of the existence of consciousness. In fact, it is consciousness as the substratum that helps the creation of awareness. In this sense, consciousness can be called the cause and awareness as its effect. In other words, consciousness is like the flame and awareness is the extent of effulgence. In the process of bringing about a change in the extent of awareness, the change agent i.e., consciousness itself does not undergo any change. Consciousness remains always in the same steady state like flame, in the wakeful, dream and sleep states but the extent of awareness expands or contracts during the course of life. Knowledge can increase due to learning or can be lost due to amnesia or forgetfulness. The presence of awareness is personally experienced by all as either knowledge or memory of experiences in life but consciousness, which is an inner attribute of being is kept as a very closely guarded mystery by nature.

The enigma of consciousness poses the greatest challenge to the scientists. In fact, the world renowned psychologist Dr. William James has said that a breakthrough in the understanding of consciousness will pale into insignificance all the scientific achievements of the past. Despite the fantastic scientific advancement in the last few decades, the one mystery that still eludes the grasp of the scientists is

the incomprehensible phenomenon of consciousness. It is consciousness that is in the driver's seat of the physical brain and the conscious mind. No psychologist and no philosopher in the world has devoted so much attention to the intricate aspects of the ethereal consciousness other than the great medieval philosopher Śrī Yāmunācārya also known as Ālavaṇḍār. This short write-up is largely based on the treatise entitled *Ātma Siddhi* which is a part of the *Siddhi Traya* of Śrī Yāmunācārya.



At a game of chess the onlookers can tell what the correct move is, better than the players themselves. Men of the world think that they are very clever, but they are attached to the things of the world—money, honours, sense-pleasures, etc. As they are actually engaged in the play, it is hard for them to hit upon the right move. Holy men who have given up the world are not attached to worldly objects. They are like the onlookers at a game of chess. They see things in their true light and can judge better than the men of the world. Hence, in living the holy life, one must put faith only in the words of those who meditate upon God and who have realised Him. If you seek legal advice, will you not consult lawyers who are in the profession? Surely you will not take the advice of the man in the street.

—*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*

सोचिअ गृही जो मोह बस करइ करम पथ त्याग।

सोचिअ जती प्रपंच रत बिगत बिबेक बिराग॥

"Nay, pitiable is the householder who out of ignorance forsakes the path of duty; and pitiable the recluse who is attached to the world and lacks discretion and dispassion."

—*Mānasa* (II. 172)

Is there a God?

—*Brahmananda*

What a question to ask? What does one mean by it? It would be much easier to understand, if we looked at the question from the standpoint of a man who wants to know what a man is. That is a very difficult question to answer; but we do know what is meant by that question, whereas we do not know what is meant by the question "Is there a God?" Let us try to get some understanding of what a man is, and, if we do that, we shall have fairly answered the question contained in the heading of this article.

You, my reader, are a man—if you are a woman, do not let it worry you, for in this article the word 'man' includes woman. You think you know what a man is. You look at yourself in a glass and probably think that you are fine well set up chappie. You are well dressed, well groomed, clean limbed, clear-eyed, straight in the limbs, chest high, and head well up. You are a fine fellow. You have no delusions about yourself. You are the only one who must matter in your circle. You have decided what you are going to attain to. You have probably decided that you will be rich, powerful, envied. You have done well, so far. You have had no set-backs. You do not wait for opportunity—you make opportunities and make them serve you. Julius Caesar did the same, and so did Napoleon. Julius Caesar almost became Emperor of Rome, and all by reason of his cleverness and skill. His is a great name even today. Napoleon was a great figure in the history of Europe just a little over one hundred years ago. He believed in himself. Many writers have filled pages in lauding his genius; and

of those who have read of his greatness many have been stirred into thinking that they, also if they had the opportunity, would shine as brightly. A few second rate people, jealous of the mighty Caesar put an end to his career, and a conceited bully, called Wellington, managed to put 'paid' to Napoleon's account. So much for two of the greatest figures of history. And now, my reader, you may indulge in dreams of your own greatness; but you have not yet sprawled your name across the pages of history, although you have a pretty big idea of your value to the world. No doubt you are a great chap in your family circle, and if death removed you from that circle, it is probable that there would be a feeling amongst those in that circle that a great calamity had happened. Your wife would have lost her man; your children would have lost the fellow who represented bread and butter and clothes and shelter to them; your parents would have lost their child. How terrible! No one would be much concerned with you, unless it was to get rid of you as soon as possible. No one would be bothering about the fact that you had lost your life; but that is a great matter, is it not? You did not intend to lose it; but you must have been shockingly careless. After all, it was your life, wasn't it? You had often said so. Sometimes, to express surprise, you would say you had never heard of such a thing in "All your life." So you did consider that the life was yours; and now you have gone and lost it. No one offers to try and get it back for you. Everyone seems to take it for granted that you would lose your life someday, though, perhaps not quite so early. But you knew that your life was valuable; and yet you lost it. You careless beggar! If it had been a diamond, you would have probably gone crazy at the loss; surely your life was worth more than any diamond? And now your friends have put you away, and on a stone at the head of the grave we find the words: "Here lies John

Smith." Is that true? There seems to be doubt about it, for on a stone close by we read: "Here lie the remains of Tom Jones." If Tom Jones's remains are in the grave, where is Tom Jones, and why did he leave his body? Did he wish to leave it, and, if he did, why did he take such pains to be sure that his body would be where his friends could find it and have the expense of putting it away? So we are faced with a problem. Is John Smith in the grave or only John Smith's remains? If John Smith is in the grave, where is the life which animated John Smith, and why did John Smith let it go? John Smith did not want to die; he sent his wife for the doctor, and he begged the doctor to save him for the sake of his children. This was certainly a good reason for wishing to live; but, even if he had had no children, John Smith would have wished to live, for he was a young man and full of vim. He certainly did not want to die; yet die he did. It seems to me that John Smith never had a life, but that life had John Smith, and that when life was tired of John Smith as a host, it just left him, and then John Smith showed what he really was—Just rags and bones. That is how it appears superficially, and a scientific study of the matter does not seem to alter the appearance.

Science says that all matter is but a pattern in radiation. And that, in plain language, means that all matter is but a combination of long and short waves of light. Just light, nothing else, are the remains of man even before they become remains. Now, if science speaks truly, my reader, are you going to alter your views as to your wonderful personality, or are you still going to hug your little delusion that you are a wonderful fellow? So far as I am concerned, it does not matter one cent. Your delusions are nothing to me. I am not concerned with either one or other of these patterns in radiation. You can be something bigger and nobler, but you will have to work hard to attain to that

greatness. No doubt you will still continue to tell yourself that you are a fine fellow, and derive some satisfaction from that idea, though, if you knew that the well shaped nose you are so proud of, would, in the not far distant future, be half eaten with lupus, you would suffer a shock; but is it not singular that, although you can imagine yourself with a diseased nose, you cannot get a shock from a consideration of yourself as a corpse? Try as you will, it does not come out right. You always seem to see yourself standing by your corpse. What is it that prevents us from seeing this mental picture in a proper perspective? We can see ourselves in our minds suffering from some terrible malformation or disease but we cannot see ourselves as dead. Funny, isn't it? But science has another shock for you, my clever friend. You have yet to learn that all your actions, all your thoughts, all your sayings, are but the outcome of certain glands in your body. No doubt you have often boasted that you would do as you liked; but you will be shocked to know that of a surety you have to like what you do. You do not believe in a God; quite right. Who or what are you? Do you know that there are probably fifteen billion cells in your body, and that each one is as much you as the totality of all those cells. If one of those cells is extruded from your body into a fertile woman and takes on its intra-uterine life, that cell multiplies and continues to do so until, in its extrauterine life, it becomes another you. You will be put in the ground with a stone at your head, and yet a cell from your body will be carrying on under the impression that you are dead, when in reality it is you. You did not know this, and perhaps you do not know it even now. It is too deep for your poor mind. Poor fellow, it is a pity you have a weak mind; but it does not matter, for after all you are only a pattern, and patterns get worn out and disappear. What does it matter if you do not

believe in a God? It will not worry God. The cells in your body do not believe in you—each one believes in its self—that is, as far as it can see—just like you. But you are only a cell in the body of God; you are not of much account, are you? You are not, at present. You must develop a little more, yet. Some day, perhaps, a million years hence, you will know. That is better than believing.



A Man may reap the fruit of compensation for his action either in this life or in the next. Your present life has direct connection with the past and the future. There is perfect continuity of life all throughout, though you take several bodies. There is one common thread that runs through the whole soul-life of countless births. The life of the individual soul (*Jīvātmā*) consists of countless earthly lives. There is intimate connection between the past, present and future, and the law of compensation operates with perfect justice and harmony. The physical body may change but the events and the law of compensation continue all throughout. Just as the daily life of a man has connection with the life of yesterday and the life of tomorrow, so also one period of earthly life has intimate bearing with the previous and future lives. If the virtuous man who has not done any evil act in this birth suffers, this is due to some wrong act that he may have committed in his previous birth. He will have his compensation in his next birth. If the wicked man who daily does many evil actions apparently enjoys in this birth, this is due to some good *Karma* he must have done in his previous birth. He will have compensation in his next birth, he will reap the fruits of his evil actions in his next birth, with much suffering. The law of compensation is inexorable and relentless.

—Swami Sivananda

Read and Digest

Love does not grow in a garden, nor it is sold in a mart. A king or a citizen—whoever likes—can have it at the cost of his head.

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Keep your deeds under constant observation.

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Give up meat, hot curries, onions and garlic. Take Sattvic foods like milk, fruits, bread, pulses and vegetables etc. Eat simple food. Wear simple clothing. Practise celibacy or moderation.

*

*

*

You have to give up your body-consciousness and repeatedly concentrate on the idea "I am of the brilliance and resplendence of the Sun, my abode is the same," if you do so repeatedly, there is no worry or anxiety which may not be burnt and destroyed for good.

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You are a member of the worldwide human race. Don't forget it. You must love the world as you love your nation and your family.

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The iron must be heated several times and hammered a hundred times before it becomes good steel. Then only it becomes fit to be made into a sharp sword and can be bent in anyway you like. So man must be heated several times in the furnace of tribulations and hammered with the persecutions of the world before he becomes pure and humble.



Hymn to Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa

(Continued from page 646)

—Dr. P. P. Sharma

III

Will one care for external means
Within whom are contained
The treasures of the universe?
How will one with his glance
Fixed on the essential
Tolerate the pomp of verbosity?
Down on earth came Rāmakṛṣṇa
And the fortress of disbelief.
Was shaken to its roots.
He would speak in common parlance,
In simple uncouth idiom,
Which coming out of his heart
Directly penetrated the heart
Of all and sundry.
That really is magic
Which unspoken
Hovers over the mind
And grips one's consciousness.
Dakṣiṇeśwara became the scene
Of such enchantment
A matchless genius was he
Of Banga Deśa, Keśava Candra Sena.
Superb his oratorical powers,
His perfect command over language

To take the whole audience captive.
 The selfsame Keśava
 Would drink in, dote on,
 And be enraptured by
 Each word emanating from
 Rāmakṛṣṇa's sacred mouth
 And would guide into
 A state of trance.

IV

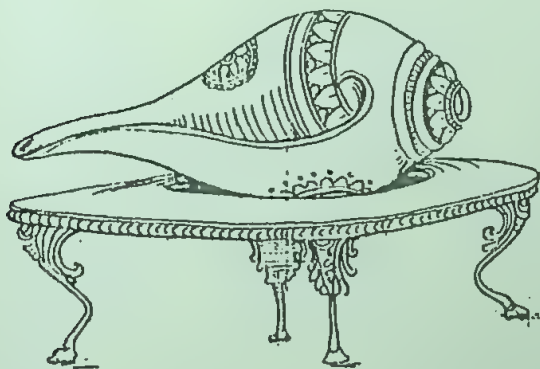
What was the source of
 This miraculous effect?
 Surely there must have been something
 In his lovable personality,
 In his blooming lotus like face,
 In his eyes kindled
 By a celestial illumination,
 In his sweet, elusive smile,
 In the movement of his limbs
 In the gesticulation of his hands
 In his feet unsteadily falling on the ground
 In his demeanour, in his feelingful looks,
 In his freedom from sensuality
 In his strange attitude
 Of getting into a trance
 To become one with divinity.
 This it was that took possession
 For life after life, of the hearts
 Of the myriad visitors
 Flocking to him.

V

Why did Rāmakṛṣṇa descend
 In the latter half of the 19th century?
 The *Gītākāra* has told us

That the *Avatāra* comes
To re-establish the reign of righteousness.
Time was of contempt for religion.
Atheism, on the strength of its forced logic,
Was trumpeting its victory.
In its conceit of recently acquired skill.
The Youth were mocking
The ramparts of Indian religion and culture
Were about to cave in
Because of the ruptures of inner contradiction.
No further waiting
The right hour had struck
For Nārāyaṇa to appear
Donning the human body.

(To be continued)



Kind and Generous Mūlarāja

Once king Bhīmadeva ruled over Gujarat some nine hundred years ago. His son Mūlarāja was a very kind hearted and promising boy. Once entire Gujarat witnessed severe drought. Not even a single drop of rain did fall upon the earth that year. Consequently the whole agricultural land was parched. People were starving. They were unable to pay the tax assessed by the state. The state employees confiscated their entire property whatever was found in their homes and arresting the inhabitants presented them before the king. Prince Mūlarāja overheard distressed people talking about the grim condition as he was playing nearby. Tears began rolling down his cheeks to listen their miserable plight. He decided to wipe out their misery.

Once the king said to the prince, "If you will become a good horse-rider you will be rewarded with your desired object." So in order to become a skilled horse-rider he was learning this art. Ultimately he became a good cavalier. One day he said to the king, "O father, as desired by you I have learnt horse riding." The king wanted to ascertain the fact. So he ordered the prince to exhibit his race. Then the prince rode his horse before his father. Now the king was pleased with his son. The king said to his son out of immense pleasure, "I am very much pleased with your performance. Ask for anything you desire." Then the prince said, "O father, if you are really pleased with me then return the confiscated property to these poor farmers and allow them to go to their homes."

The king was very happy at the generosity of his son.

He said to his son with tears of delight in his eyes, "O son, you are so great. You demanded nothing for your own self. Do ask please." At this the prince replied, "O father, if you are pleased with me in true sense then promise not to realize tax from the villagers in case of drought or such calamities. Enforce a rule regarding this matter now and here. If it be so I would be proud of you and my soul would be filled with joy."

The king did the same as desired by Mūlarāja, the king released back the confiscated property to the farmers and enforced a rule not to realize tax in case of famine. The farmers returned to their houses showing their deep sense of gratitude towards the king.

Courtesy—Kalyana



Once a man asked me, "If in reading the *Bhagavadgītā* my pronunciation isn't exactly right, will I incur sin?" The answer to this question is given by Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa: Little children are not able to say father or 'mother'; they only utter some sounds. But the father and mother understand that the child is speaking to them, and they are happy upon hearing his childish speech. It is the same with God. If we sincerely love God, then in whatever way we call upon Him, in whatever language, and by whatever name, God will listen and will understand what is in our hearts.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The goal of human life is to realize this Supreme Truth; keeping your eyes fixed exclusively on this goal, advance steadily towards it with a determined will. Spiritual knowledge is that which aims at the realization of this goal; that alone is 'higher education, in the true sense of the term; nay, that is real and true education.

—Hanumanprasad Poddar

Concept of Sambhūti (created world) and Asambhūti (the Nature)

—Prof. Harish C. Gaur

Concepts of *Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti* are discussed in the following verses of *Īśā Upaniṣad*—

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ सम्भूत्या रताः ॥

(12)

“Those who worship *Asambhūti* (non-becoming) alone enter into blinding darkness; those delight in (devoted to) *Sambhūti* (becoming) alone enter into greater darkness.”

अन्यदेवाहुः सम्भवादन्यदाहुरसम्भवात् ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षरे ॥

(*Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* 13)

“One result is obtained from worship of *Sambhāva* (of *Sambhūti*) and another (quite different) from that of *Asambhāva* (from worship of *Asambhūti*). Thus we have learnt from (teaching of) the wise, who have explained that all to us.”

सम्भूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्याऽमृतमश्नुते ॥

(*Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* 14)

“He who understands (worships) both *Sambhūti* (becoming) and *Vināśa* (destruction) together, having overcome death (from worship of) *Vināśa*, attains to immortality by devotion to *Asambhūti*.”

There is some controversy about the use and interpretation of *Sambhūti* and *Vināśa* in verse 14 above. Typically, in the opinion of R. T. H. Griffith (*Yajurveda Samhitā*, revised by S. Pratāp, p. 539), *Sambhūti* in the context of the verse

should be construed as undeveloped Nature (*Mūla Prakṛti*), meaning *Asambhūti*; *Vināśa* is considered as destruction (of what is born, referring to *Sambhūti*). According to Śaṅkarācārya (quoted by S. Sarvānanda Īśa. Up., Rāmakṛṣṇa Maṭha p. 18), “*Sambhūti* in the first line of the verse should be taken as aphaeresis of *Asambhūti*, the initial letter ‘A’ being elided. The second line reads *Vināśena mṛtyum tīrtvā sambhūtyā* “where *Tīrtvā* and *Asambhūtyā* are combined euphonically; thus he holds that *Sambhūti* (in the first line of the verse) text should mean non-becoming (Nature) or *Mūla Prakṛti* referred to as *Asambhūti* and *Vināśa* as *Sambhūti*. On the other hand, S. D. Caudhary, a *Saniskṛta* scholar in the gloss of this verse, using *Śivāmśa* commentary of *Īśa. Upaniṣad*, has accepted *Sambhūti* as given (to mean creation) but interpreted *Vināśa* (*Vi + Nāśa*) as negation or destruction or *Asambhūti*. Either way, the verse, in the context of similar verses for *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* (*Īśa.* 9—11), would be intended to convey ‘he who understands and is devoted to *Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti* together, having overcome death, attains to immortality.’

The three verses are to be considered together. In brief, the first condemns separate worship of (devotion to) *Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti*; the second declares separate fruits from the worship of each of these elements (*Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti*) when pursued independently by different persons. These are intended to teach their combination. The last verse enjoins successive devotion to (worship of) *Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti*, when the fruits are to the same person (not to different persons practising each cult independently) enables one to overcome death and attainment to immortality.

It may be noted that *Sambhūti* in verse 13, is referred to as *Sambhāva* (from *Sambhūti*) and (according to Śaṅkarācārya) as destruction *Vināśa*, meaning that which is destructible in verse 14. Also, a doubt arises how one can

overcome death through *Vināśa* (destruction of what is born) and attain to immortality by devotion to *Asambhūti*. In order to understand the apparent discrepancy, it is necessary to understand the terms *Sambhūti*, *Asambhūti* and *Vināśa* as used in these verses. This presentation is based on Śaṅkarācārya's interpretation.

Sambhūti literally means 'becoming', the fact of being born/created. An effect that has this quality (of being born) is also considered *Sambhūti*. That which is other than this, (non-becoming) is *Asambhūti*.

At this stage it is necessary to invoke briefly the basic principles of *Sāṃkhya*, one of the six systems of Indian philosophy. This considers two concepts: (sentient) *Puruṣa* and (insentient) *Prakṛti*, the latter meaning the nature. Before evolution (or after the last cycle of *Pralaya*), the insentient *Prakṛti* is unmanifested and the three *Guṇas* of *Prakṛti* are in (dynamic) equilibrium. Since this will be the basis of manifestation of universe and *Saṃsāra*, this state of *Prakṛti* is referred to as *Mūla Prakṛti*. It remains unmanifested till influenced by *Puruṣa*, when the equilibrium between three *Guṇas* of *Prakṛti* is disturbed which then leads to evolution (manifested state, in succession as *Mahattattva* or *Buddhi*, *Ahaṃkāra*, five elements of Nature in subtle state (*Tanmātrās*), organs of perception and of action, mind (*Mana*), *Mahābhūtas*.

Thus in terms of *Guṇas* of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, *Sambhūti* would correspond to the condition when the three *Guṇas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) are not in equilibrium. This is the stage when *Prakṛti* is involved in transformation (*Vikṛti*). *Sambhūti* and *Sambhavana* signify the change in nature, which results in the creation (manifestation) of the universe including the first-born *Hiraṇyagarbha* and the phenomenal world (*Saṃsāra*). *Asambhūti* (non-becoming) is the stage of *Mūla Prakṛti*, when the three *Guṇas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) are in equilibrium; it is the unmanifested state.

In Vedantic terminology, *Asambhūti* would be (unmanifested) *Nirguṇa Brahman* and *Sambhūti* as (manifested) *Saguṇa Brahman*. In physical sciences, *Asambhūti*, the unmanifested state may be considered as the cause, which with *Puruṣa*, results in manifestation of the universe etc., (*Sambhūti*) as the effect. Śaṅkarācārya considered *Sambhūti* as manifestation of *Brahma* (from the superimposition of the *Guṇas* of *Māyā* on *Īśvara*) or the phenomenal creator *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the golden germ of *Prajāpati* in the beginning of the cycle. He in turn creates the universe. The first manifestation of *Brahmā* is also destructible. Hence the use of the word *Vināśa* for *Sambhūti* (becoming). By worship of *Hiraṇyagarbha* one may attain to supernatural/occult powers, but these do not lead to immortality. Whatever is created is destructible. Thus practice of *Sambhūti* (alone) can be understood to lead to blinding darkness.

One wonders how does practice of *Asambhūti* (alone) also leads to blinding darkness. *Asambhūti* is unmanifested *Mūla Prakṛti*. The unmanifested (as *Nirguṇa Brahman*) has been praised in *Bhagavadgītā* as omnipresent, unchangeable, immovable and is said to lead one to abode of no-return, but the Lord pointed out greater is their trouble whose minds are set on the manifested; the goal of unmanifested is very difficult for the embodied to reach (*Gītā* XII. 5). The embodied meaning those who are attached to or have identified themselves with their gross body. They are far from the realization that body is not the (real) self, which to them remains concealed within (five) layers of ignorance (*Pañcakośa*). This is not easy. One would also need preparation as possessing of the four means (*Sādhana Catuṣṭaya*) emphasized by Śaṅkarācārya (V. C. 18—27). These include discrimination (*Viveka*), renunciation of the desire of all transitory enjoyments (*Vairāgya*), possession of six traits *Śama, Dama, Uparati, Titikṣā, Śraddhā, Samādhāna*)

and an intense desire for emancipation. Also, one has to overcome (five) afflictions (*Pañcakleśa*). Thus the aspirant even on a superior path as this (*Asambhūti*) but without necessary preparation would meet greater blinding darkness. This is the purport of this verse.

The second verse indicates different results (destinations) to those following *Sambhūti* and *Asambhūti*. The path of *Sambhūti* (coming into being), the birth and what is born necessarily meets death. On an individual level, birth-death cycle continues. Śaṅkarācārya described it thus—

“Again birth, again death,

Again lying in mother’s womb,

This *Samsāra* process is very hard to overcome.”

(*Bhaja Go.* 21)

At the cosmic level, the Lord has described this cycle thus; “On the approach of (Brahmā’s) day all manifestations emerge from the unmanifested state; at the approach of (Brahmā’s) night they all merge into that alone which is called unmanifested. The very multitude that existed in the preceding day of *Brahmā* (not others) merge, in spite of themselves, into unmanifested at the approach of the night and remanifest on the approach of Brahmā’s day (*Gītā* VIII. 18-19). This unmanifested, which is the seed of manifest, has been considered by Griffith as *Avidyā* itself. The Lord continues: “Beyond this unmanifested, there is the eternal unmanifested reality (superior *Brahman*) which does not get destroyed at the destruction of all being” (*Gītā* VIII. 20). In this verse a distinction is made between the unmanifested which is the seed of manifest (seed of multitude of beings characterized as *Avidyā*) and the eternal unmanifested, described as the supreme goal (the supreme abode of Viṣṇu), having attained which there is no return (*Gītā* VIII. 21).

The destination of those devoted to *Asambhūti* with

appropriate preparation and suitably guided has the potentiality of being led to the abode of 'no return'. Thus, the purport of the second verse (*Īśa*. 13) that destination of those following the two paths is not the same, is easy to understand.

The third verse (*Īśa*. 14) enjoins, "He who understands (worships/devoted to) both *Sambhūti* and *Vināśa* together, can overcome death from worship of *Vināśa* (*Sambhūti* according to Śāṅkarācārya). One overcomes *Vināśa* through an understanding of the ephemeral nature of *Samsāra* and all that constitutes it, by removal of ignorance. Then all emotional entanglements (*Hṛdaya Granthi*) are loosened, which leads one to immortality by practice of *Asambhūti*. It applies to the same person. In *Vedānta Sambhūti* is the practice of devotion to *Saguṇa Brahman* and *Vināśa* (according to Śāṅkarācārya) is the practice and preparation that leads to *Nirguṇa Brahman* (unmanifested and without traits). Devotion to *Saguṇa Brahman* is easy to practise; there is a base on which to concentrate, but it has limitations.

About devotion to *Saguṇa Brahman* the Lord said, "People deprived of discrimination by desires of various objects and guided by their own nature, following this or that rite devote themselves to other deities, following the relevant methods (well known for the adoration of the concerned deity)" (*Gītā* VII. 20) however little realizing that the desired gains are dispensed by Me alone. Later and suitably prepared one attains to *Nirguṇa Brahman*. One leads to the other in the order: first devotion to *Saguṇa Brahman* and later to *Nirguṇa Brahman*. Implicit in this are two levels of worship. The combined effect leads one to the Lords' abode of 'no return', the immortality.



The Bliss of Contact with God

Blessed you are that you are hearing the message divine, the message of spirit, the message that solves the mystery of the universe. What fear have you ? Cast out all fear ! There is nothing to be afraid of any more when you have touched the great power of spirit, which controls the very forces of creation, all the machinery of this universe. What greater hope could you have, what greater security could you seek, than the contact of the Infinite Being that is the essence of all that exists?

Those who are wandering solely in the wasteland of material consciousness, astray in a desert of suffering, we don't blame them. We only say, "Why do you forget the essence of your being, and your soul's claim on the Father? The earth upon which you stand was planted with life by God; why forget Him who is the source of everything?" We don't condemn anyone who is temporarily bewildered by delusion, for we know that everyone who makes the effort can find his way to God, right here amidst daily life, with all its activity and responsibilities.

The bliss of contact with God never grows stale; He is Eternal Joy. Is there any person in the whole world who does not want joy? I see all kinds of people; I look at their faces, not to judge them, but to see if in their countenance I behold what I have found. In my early days, if in the remotest corner of my heart I had a desire for some material possession, I made it a point to observe persons who had those things, to see if they were happy. Never did I find one ! So I gained a lot of experience through the experiences of others. There is no need to live the experience of putting

the hand in fire to see if it burns. If you touch a high-voltage wire even lightly to see how it feels, it will electrocute you. Look at those who pursue worldly goals. How many are really happy? But God has made me very, very happy. He is the only harbour of safety from the storms of this world. "Take shelter in Him with all the eagerness of thy heart. By His grace thou shalt obtain the utmost peace and the Eternal Shelter."

In Him I have found the joy of my life, the indescribable blessedness of my existence, the wonderful realization of His everywhere-ness right within me.

I want you all to have that. You cannot know Him by mechanical prayer, nor by reading or intellectual study, but by devotion. Cultivate that. What you feel for those you love, give of that to God. Say to Him; "The great love I feel for my dear ones, God, I give the first of that love, the essence of that love, to Thee. Receive my love!" This is the way to get acquainted with Him. But few souls¹ give even this simple measure of love to God. Whoever truly loves God, knows Him, feels Him. You should all thank Him for the great opportunity, He has given to you to know Him. When I am with those who have pursued this line of thinking, those who love God more and more, I feel a great harmony. God says of those souls: "Their thoughts fully on Me, their beings surrendered to Me, enlightening one another, proclaiming Me always, My devotees are contented and joyful." All I want to culture within you is that relationship with Him wherein each time you say—"I love you, God," every cell, every feeling, every thought will awaken in the endlessness of His joy.

—*Self-Realization*



Some Principles of Spiritual Life

—His Holiness Sri Bhola Nathji Maharaj

The following principles should always be borne in mind and a constant effort should be made to act upon them. Our present condition is such that it compels us to adopt a simple and cheap line of treatment.

(1) Perform no action in secret: or in other words, when you are going to do something which is bad either in your relation to society or in relation to God and it strikes you that secrecy is required for it, then abandon it at once.

(2) Do nothing which after doing will lead you to tell lies.

(3) Do not desire evil for anyone, no matter what his religion or nationality may be.

(4) Help some poor person or persons as far as you can. If you are not in a position to help, then try not to hurt anyone.

(5) Never remain alone (mentally), i.e., imagine that that Reality, that great power, is always with you. All your words and actions should be worthy of His presence with you at all times.

(6) Find times once every morning and again in the evening for prayers. In the morning, address God in your own words expressing a sentiment like this; "O Lord of all creation! I am Thine. For some reason I am again trapped in this body. The world is very alluring and powerful. I am going out into it for the day. Hold me by the hand and give me strength to behave in it in the right way. Keep your own remembrance always fresh in my mind. I am a child and have no wisdom. In any case, I cannot overpower

evil thoughts created by my senses. For that reason please do hold me by the hand, and take me through the day, under Thy own guidance and protection. Do grasp my hand, please."

In the evening turn your attention inwards to see where and on how many occasions weakness appeared and you fell. Repent genuinely and pray to God to help you through similar occasions when they arise next time, without a fall. On the other hand, if any good act appears to have been performed by you during the day, be not proud, but thank God because His kindness helped you to do it successfully.

(7) In all experiences of pleasure and pain that come during the day try to see His will prevailing. Enshrine Him in your heart perpetually. Look upon your ties and relationships as an actor looks upon his stage-relations whose reality is immortal but whose dresses are changeable. Either dissolve these ties completely internally, or establish a permanent and abiding relationship with them through your imagination.

(8) Do no good turn with the expectation of getting a return for it but always try to please the Master with your play or actions in the world.



Kalyana-Kalpataru very much regrets that in February issue page 627 line no. 18 the word 'elopement' has appeared which should have been 'abduction'.

—Editor

I am that I Am

—Swami Vivekananda

Everything is substance plus name and form. Name and form come and go, but substance remains ever the same. Substance, form, and name make this pitcher. When it is broken, you do not call it pitcher any more, nor do you see its pitcher form. Its name and form vanish, but its substance remains. All the differentiation in substance is made by name and form. These are not real, because they vanish. What we call nature is not the substance, unchanging and indestructible. Nature is time, space, and causation. Nature is name and form. Nature is *Māyā*. *Māyā* means name and form, into which everything is cast. *Māyā* is not real. We could not destroy it or change it if it were real. The substance is noumenon, *Māyā* is phenomenon. There is the real 'me' which nothing can destroy and there is the phenomenal 'me' which is continually changing and disappearing.

The fact is, everything existing has two aspects. One is noumenal, unchanging and indestructible; the other is phenomenal, changing and destructible. Man in his true nature is substance, soul, spirit. This soul, this spirit, never changes, is never destroyed; but it appears to be clothed with a form and to have a name associated with it. This form and name are not immutable or indestructible; they continually change and are destroyed. Yet men foolishly seek immortality in this changeable aspect, in the body and mind—they want to have an eternal body. I do not want that kind of immortality.

What is the relation between me and nature? In so far as nature stands for name and form or for time, space, and causality, I am not part of nature, because I am free, I am immortal, I am unchanging and infinite. The question does not arise whether I have free will or not; I am beyond any will at all. Wherever there is will, it is never free. There is no freedom of will whatever. There is freedom of that which becomes will when name and form get hold of it, making it their slave. That substance—the soul—as it were, moulds itself, as it were, throws itself into the cast of name and form, and immediately becomes bound, whereas it was free before. And yet its original nature is still there. That is why it says, "I am free: in spite of all this bondage, I am free." And it never forgets this.

But when the soul has become the will, it is no more really free. Nature pulls the strings, and it has to dance as nature wants it to. Thus have you and I danced throughout the years. All the things that we see, do, feel, know, all our thoughts and actions, are nothing but dancing to the dictates of nature. There has been, and there is, no freedom in any of this. From the lowest to the highest, all thoughts and actions are bound by law, and none of these pertain to our real Self.

My true self is beyond all law. Be in tune with slavery, with nature, and you live under law, you are happy under law. But the more you obey nature and its dictates, the more bound you become; the more in harmony with ignorance you are, the more you are at the beck and call of every thing in the universe. Is this harmony with nature, this obedience to law, in accord with the true nature and destiny of man? What mineral ever quarrelled with and disputed any law? What tree or plant ever defined any law? This table is in harmony with nature, with law; but a table it remains always, it does not become any better. Man begins to

struggle and fight against nature. He makes many mistakes, he suffers. But eventually he conquers nature and realises his freedom. When he is free, nature becomes his slave.

The awakening of the soul to its bondage and its effort to stand up and assert itself—this is called life. Success in this struggle is called evolution. The eventual triumph, when all the slavery is blown away, is called salvation, *Nirvāṇa*, freedom. Everything in the universe is struggling for liberty. When I am bound by nature, by name and form, by time, space and causality, I do not know what I truly am. But even in this bondage my real self is not completely lost. I strain against the bonds; one by one they break, and I become conscious of my innate grandeur. Then comes complete liberation. I attain to the clearest and fullest consciousness of myself—I know that I am the infinite spirit, the master of nature, not its slave. Beyond all differentiation and combination, beyond space, time, and causation, I am that I am.



We must inform our minds that no one in this universe depends upon us; not one beggar depends on our charity; not one soul on our kindness; not one living thing on our help. All are helped on by nature, and will be so helped even though millions of us were not here. The course of nature will not stop for such as you and me; it is, as already pointed out, only a blessed privilege to you and to me that we are allowed in the way of helping others, to educate ourselves.

—Swami Vivekananda

Inspirit Us With Generosity

Heavenly Father, inspirit us with generosity. Thy being is an outpouring of bounty; let us, too, know the joy of giving.

Teach us to spend for others' necessities as naturally as for our own. Since we shudder at even the thought of destitution for ourselves, may we sympathetically help those who in actuality know the pangs of want.

Let us realize that to die rich, without having shared our treasures, is to die poor in thine eyes; and to die poor because of liberality is to die rich with Thy blessings.

Men selfishly blinded by opulence must experience poverty in this or a future earth-life, because in the abodes of the world-abandoned they saw Thee not.

In all experiences of Thy children it is Thine omnipresent consciousness that enjoys and suffers. Thou didst bestow riches on Thyself (in the forms of the wealthy) as an intricate human test to see how charitable Thou wouldst be to Thyself (in the forms of the needy).

The largehearted man, receiving from Thee loving largess and freely bestowing it on others, expands into the universal self.

Accepting daily Thine endless gifts, may we praise Thee and thank Thee, O Giver of All !

—Paramahansa Yogananda

An Appeal

Dear friends,

It is a world-wide acknowledged fact that the *Upaniṣads* are a tale of the transcendental journey of human intelligence—from matter to the soul to the super soul where it found its ultimate destination.

Upaniṣads are the end of Knowledge thus they are known as *Vedānta*. *Upaniṣadic* knowledge is not a product of logic but is a result of intuition.

They are very secular in the true sense of the term. *Upaniṣadic* knowledge cannot be termed as Hindu, Muslim or Christian knowledge. It does not deal with the socio-religious problems of the human race.

We feel that by adopting *Upaniṣadic* thoughts we can break away all barriers which divide man from man and make the earth a better place to live in. We feel that the spiritual growth is the only panacea for all evils from which the man suffers at present.

I, therefore, make an appeal to our learned contributors and scholarly readers to do their share in the present combat against the spreading materialism and preserve our social and cultural values.

Yours truly
Editor

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